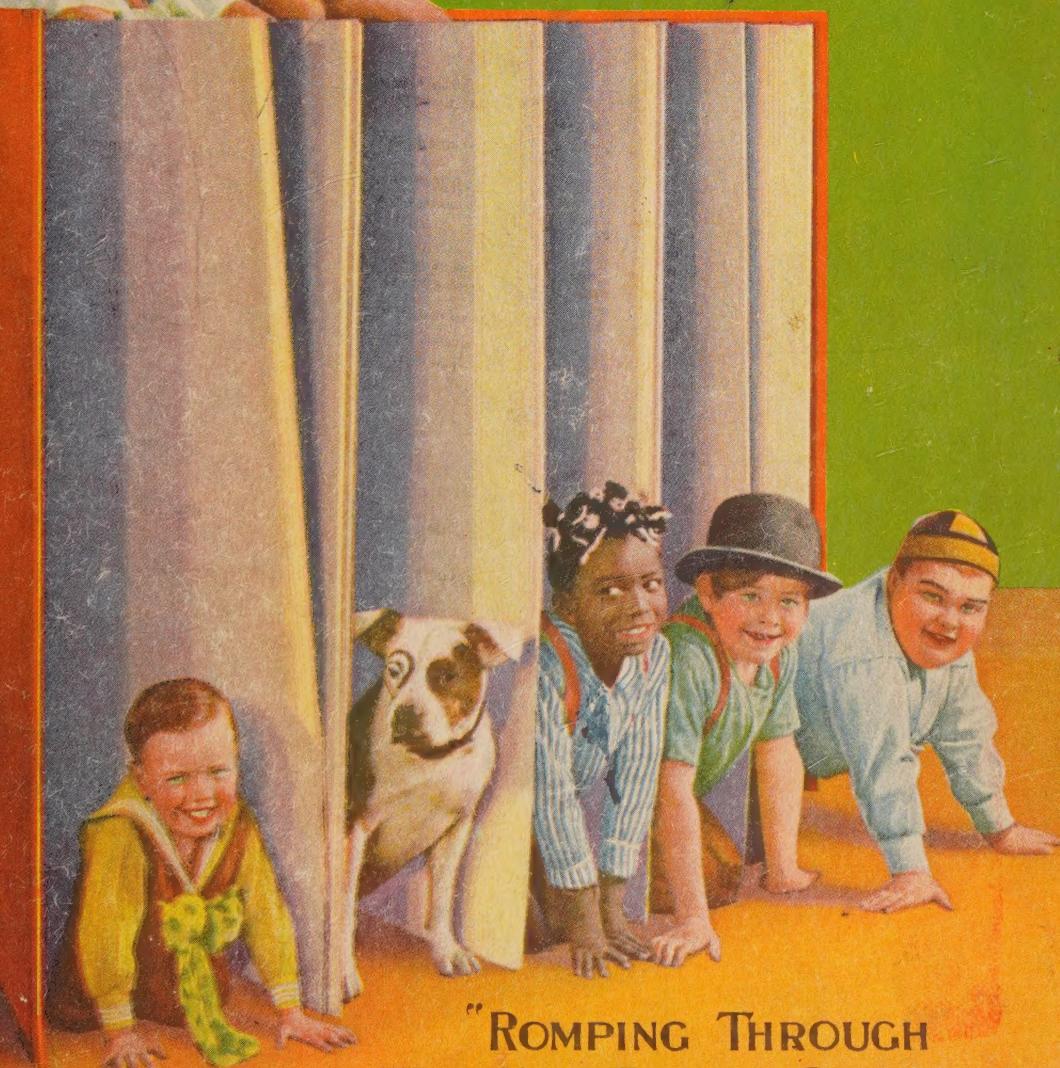


A Story
of
**OUR
GANG**



"ROMPING THROUGH
THE HAL ROACH COMEDIES"

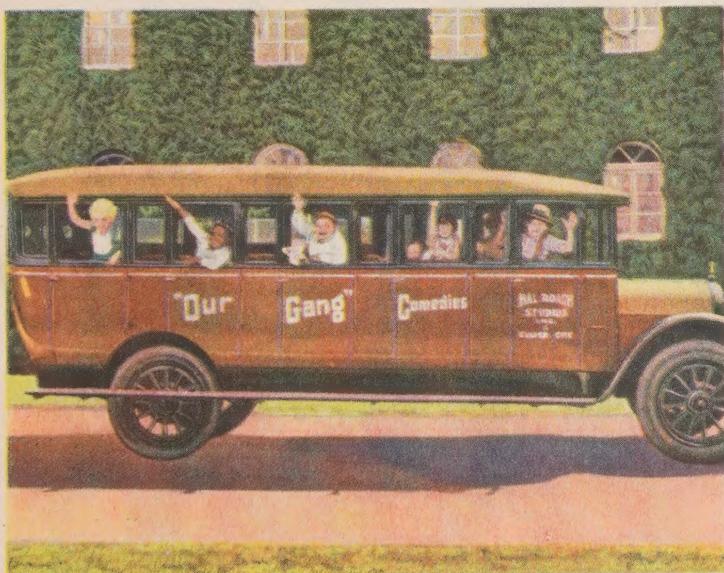


Hail, Hail, Our Gang's all here, the six
Roach Rascals and Pete, the dog

Stephen Slyer Myers

A DAY with OUR GANG

By ELEANOR LEWIS PACKER



*The Merry Rascals of Our Gang Appear Exclusively in
Hal Roach Comedies*

Pictures by STAX

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From Cousin Marian
Christmas 1929

A Day With Our Gang



Ting-a-ling-ting-a-ling-ling!

Six alarm clocks were merrily singing, "Come on, Gang, it's another day, and all little girls and boys should be awake."

It was just seven o'clock, and time for all good Gangsters to be out in the golden California sunshine.

Joe didn't wait for the clock to call him. He hopped out of bed and was half dressed before the first whir. Fat and jolly, with thick brown hair and twinkling blue eyes and round little cheeks, Joe is the early bird of the Gang. He is always first, wherever the Gangsters go. He never, never waits to be called.

Farina rolled his big black eyes at the clock, and slid back under the covers of his warm cozy bed.

"Farina, it's time to get up. Hurry," his mother called and called and called.

Farina likes to sleep. He isn't really lazy, but, oh, the pillows are so nice and soft. Every morning his mother has to pull the covers back and tickle his bare brown toes to waken him.

At the first jingle of his clock's bell, tiny Wheezer sat up in his little bed, and peeked through the bars which keep him from rolling out and bumping his baby head.

"Time to get up, time to get up. Wheezer'll be late," he called to his Mother and Daddy in the next room.

He is only three and the baby of the Gang. His cheeks are so pink and his eyes so round and big and bright, that he looks exactly like a live doll in his little white nightie.

Harry Spear, six years old and with a million freckles spattered all over his round little face, jumped out of bed and made a flying leap for the noisy clock.

"Hey, everybody, it's time to get up." There was no more sleep in Harry's house. The water splashed everywhere as he plunged under the shower.



Joe Cobb, eleven years old, and as jolly as he is fat

In her dainty pink and white room, little Jean Darling opened her big blue eyes at the clock's warning call. She shook her golden curls and sat up in her bright-painted bed. From across the room her ten dolls, all tucked away in their beds, looked at her and smiled good morning.

"Wake up, babies. It's another day. We'll have to hurry."

Jean's little pink feet pattered over to her doll family.

In another house, miles and miles away, Mary Ann popped open her dancing blue eyes and rumpled her straight black hair. With one big jump she landed in the middle of the rosy rug beside her little cream-colored bed. Her ten twinkling toes slid in her stockings, while she sang merrily to the yellow canary in the cage by the window.

Our Gang was awake, and ready for all the fun of its busy, happy day.

Six pink mouths gobbled six breakfasts in six dining rooms, while their bright eyes watched the now-quiet clocks.

Joe ran out into the yard to kick his new football a time or two, before putting it away until evening.

Farina sat patiently, repairing the engine of his electric train, while his mother braided his hair in those funny little pigtails and tied each one with a white string.

Wheezer jumped down from the breakfast table and scooted around the house on his shiny, new velocipede.

Harry Spear counted his three hundred marbles and put them safely away in his old cigar box, to be carried to the studio for a fast game with Joe and Farina.





Farina, who has almost forgotten that his real name is Allen Clay Hoskins



Jean dressed her dolls, fed her big yellow Collie and sat very still while her mother combed her honey-colored curls.

Little Mary Ann skipped out to her doll house to make sure that her doll babies were safe and well for the day.

At half-past eight, the six Gangsters and Pete, their very own dog, arrived at the studio.

The studio is tucked away among low, green hills, in a little town called Culver City, just a short drive from Los Angeles. The studio, itself, is a miniature city, with its buildings, streets, sidewalks and tiny factories, where all the things used in the Gang pictures are made.

"Hi, there, Joe," Farina called as he ran down the driveway. Joe is always the very first one to arrive.

"Hi, Farina, how's tricks?" Joe answered.

Joe and Farina are the oldest Gangsters. Joe started in the Gang pictures where he was only a tiny little fat boy, four years old. He is eleven now and weighs one hundred and twenty pounds. His cheeks are so chubby that, when he laughs, his eyes almost disappear.

Farina is eight years old. When he first joined the Gang, he was a roly-poly brown baby, crawling all around the floors of the stages.

"Here comes Wheezer," Joe shouted. "Look out there, Wheezer, you'll fall and break your nose."



Hard-boiled Harry, who has a million freckles and no front teeth

Around the corner of one of the buildings toddled Wheezer, running so fast that his plump little legs got all tangled up, and over he toppled with a thud.

Then Mary Ann and Jean arrived, and a few seconds later Harry came racing through the studio gates.

"Hello, there, everybody," he yelled. It is hard for Harry to talk, because he has lost all his front teeth, and his tongue gets all twisted. Joe says he is going to make Harry a set of wooden teeth some day soon.

"Oh, goody, goody, here comes Mr. McGowan," Mary Ann suddenly cried and clapped her little hands.

A big, blue roadster came whizzing down the driveway. Out jumped a man with smiling eyes and hair just beginning to turn gray. Mr. McGowan is his Gang's second Daddy. He has directed their pictures, played with them and loved them for the seven years that they have been amusing all the other little boys and girls in the world.

"Hello, kids," he smiled, pinching Mary Ann's cheek, pulling Jean's curls, patting Joe's back, squeezing Farina's arm, rumpling Harry's tousled hair and swinging Wheezer high in the air, "Everybody here and happy?"

Joe's Dad always comes to the studio with him. The two are great pals since Joe's mother died and left them all alone. Together they go to all the baseball and football games and to the picture shows. Joe is just as jolly as he is fat. He is in the seventh grade of the Gang school.

Farina, the second oldest Gangster, is in the fourth grade. His skin is the color of rich chocolate. His eyes





Wheeler, who is three and the baby of the gang

are bright and big and black and, oh, how he can roll them. His teeth are as white as snow. He lets his hair grow long on the top of his head so that his mother can braid it into the funny pigtails for the pictures. His real name isn't Farina. It is Allen Clay Hoskins.

Sometimes Farina's mother comes to the studio with him. At other times his aunt comes to take care of him. His favorite stunt is to sit still and close his eyes while he makes big round tears roll out from under his lashes.

Jean Darling, six-year-old blonde beauty, is next oldest in Gang membership. She took her place in the merry little circle two years ago. Jean looks like a big French doll with her golden ringlets and her pansy-purple eyes.

Jean's Daddy died when she was just a wee baby, and her mother comes with her to the studio every day. Jean and her mother live all alone.

Next in age with the Gang comes Mary Ann Jackson, five-year-old imp. She is a dear little freckle-faced tomboy, with Dutch-cut hair and twinkling blue eyes. Mary Ann's mother and three-year-old brother always come with her.

Mary Ann and Wheezer joined the Gang at about the same time. Wheezer is a chubby little fellow with round blue eyes and the sweetest smile in the world. His real name is Bobby Hutchins, and his Daddy always is with him.

The newest member of the Gang is Harry, the tough-guy Rascal, who joined the bunch a year and a half ago. Harry has light brown hair, shining gray eyes and millions of freckles. He is in the first grade of school.

Wherever Harry goes, his Grandmother goes with him, to keep him from climbing on the roofs of the buildings or from falling into the swimming pool.

Then there is Pete, the Gang's faithful companion and playmate. Pete is a full blooded bull terrier, six years old and black and white, with one black-ringed eye. Pete loves each and every one of the Rascals, and the Rascals adore Pete.

"What are we going to do today, Mr. McGowan?" Every morning the Gang asks this same question.

"Oh, boy, we're going to have heaps of fun today. At ten o'clock we're going to that pretty little park you all liked so



Jean Darling, golden-haired heart-breaker

well and play. You rascals can go to school until I call you."

"Hooray!" the Gang shouted and disappeared.

Up to their sunny school room on the second floor of the studio's main office building, ran the four oldest Gangsters.

Mary Ann and Wheezer started a game of hide-and-go-seek, with Pete galloping gaily at their little heels.

It was Wheezer's first turn to hide, and he climbed into the depths of one of the studio trucks. Pete followed him.

"Oh, Petie, det away," scolded little Wheezer, in a whisper. "Mary'll find Wheezer if you stay here."

But Pete would not budge an inch. And, of course, Mary Ann discovered Wheezer.

So the game went merrily on, while the other four rascals settled themselves with their pencils, papers, and books.

The Gang's cheerful schoolroom has walls lined with blackboards and a little desk for each of the four scholars. Their teacher is sweet-faced, brown-haired, patient Mrs. Carter, who has been with the gang since its very beginning.

Joe likes reading, writing and spelling the best of all his studies. He is a good boy, and always knows his lessons.

Farina is sort of fidgety now and then, and wants to peek out of the windows and draw funny pictures on the blackboards, but he is very smart in arithmetic.





Mary Ann Jackson, freckle-faced and five years old



Jean and Harry are learning to read little stories and have loads of fun trying to see which one can spell faster.

At ten o'clock the big red bus, with gold letters spelling "Our Gang" on its sides, lumbered out of the studio garage and into the driveway. Into its roomy insides piled the Gang, Pete, the fathers, mothers, grandmother, and aunt. Away they went, to a shady park near the edge of the town.

There the bus stopped and everyone piled out. Mr. McGowan was waiting for them, standing beside two big trucks from which men were unloading lights, cameras, and all the things they use in making moving pictures.

Down on the ground sat Mr. McGowan with the children all around him.

"Now, here's where we have a lot of fun," he promised. "We're going to play Indian today. See, here are all the bright feathers I brought for Harry and Farina to wear."

"What am I goin' to be?" Joe asked.

"I'm just coming to that, Joe, honey," Mr. McGowan went on. "You're going to be a settler in the woods, a farmer, a pioneer, you know what I mean from your history books, Joe. Over under that tree, where that pile of wood is, is your house. Mary Ann and Jean are mothers, and Wheezer, you'll be their bad, bad, little boy, who runs out of the house and gets captured by the terrible Indians.



"Here are your guns," Mr. McGowan gave the settlers popguns with corks for bullets. "Now, Joe, when you see Farina and Harry creeping through the trees, you load the rifles and show Mary Ann and Jean how to shoot.

"Wheezer, honey, you run out when your Mother isn't looking and let the Indians capture you. Then, Joe, you and Mary Ann and Jean will dash out to rescue Wheezer.

The six Gangsters drank in every word their beloved Mr. McGowan said, their eyes never moving from his face. Pete lay quietly beside Wheezer, his ears cocked.

"What'll Petie do?" Wheezer lisped, patting Pete's head.



"Pete will be Joe's dog, and he will run out to help in the battle with the Indians. Now let's see you all do it. Just forget the cameras and have a good time."

With gay shouts the children ran to their places. Farina and Harry hid in the sheltering bushes. Joe, Mary Ann, Jean, Wheezer, and Pete crawled into their make-believe house. The little Indians streaked their faces with bright red paint and donned their feather head-pieces.

All morning long, while the cameras clicked, the Gang played its merry game of Indian. The redskins stalked silently through the bushes. Jean and Mary Ann shrieked shrilly when they captured baby Wheezer. Joe loaded his



popgun and fought bravely to save his home and the child. Pete barked and capered madly in his excitement.

At noon they all climbed again into the bus, for the trip back to the studio and a good, warm luncheon.

Early in the afternoon, after lunch in Our Gang tea room, they were back in the park once more.

Mrs. Carter set four little camp chairs in the shade of a friendly tree, and spread her books and papers on a folding table. There, between scenes, the four older Gangsters finished their day's school work.

Finally Mrs. Carter closed her books, put away her pencils and papers and said that school was over for the day.

With shouts of glee Harry dragged out his cigar box filled to the brim with shining marbles. Joe and Farina produced their prize "shooters," and the game was on. On a smooth, bare place under the trees, the three boys bent over a thrilling contest. They stopped only when Mr. McGowan called them to the cameras. They returned to their game as soon as they had finished the scene.

When the lucky Harry had won all the marbles, every one, and had added them to the overflowing pile in his cigar box, the three Gangsters nodded their busy little heads over a picture puzzle which Joe's father had brought.

From the safety of their hiding place in a corner of the bus, Mary Ann and Jean brought forth their favorite dolls. In the depths of their mother's hand bags they found thread, needles, thimbles, and gay scraps of cloth. Their little pink tongues crept out of the corners of their mouths as they worked on new wardrobes for their doll children.

Wheezer wandered from the boys to the girls and back to the boys, with the faithful Pete ever at his heels. Suddenly they discovered a toad, and the chase was on.

Four o'clock came in a very little while.

"Well, we're through for the day," called Mr. McGowan after Wheezer had been rescued from the ferocious Indians, who finally bit the dust, wounded by the volley of cork bullets from the popguns. "You can all go home now, but be sure to be at the studio at nine sharp in the morning."

Once more the troupe, laughing, talking, singing, climbed into the bus.



Back at the studio they romped a little longer. Then, with last good-byes, they started for their homes, to play some more with their footballs, electric trains, velocipedes.

At seven o'clock six tired, sleepy Gangsters climbed into their little beds in six houses in different parts of the city.

"Good-night, Dad." Joe snuggled down under the covers. "Did you get tickets for the baseball game Saturday?"

Farina turned over in bed, his eyes shining in the darkness. "Oh, Mom," he called through the open door, "you-all won't fohget to buy that switch foh my 'lectric train?"

Harry buried his snub nose deeper in the softness of the pillow. "Grandma," he mumbled sleepily, "what do you think about me getting a white rat? Gee, I could scare Jean and Mary Ann crazy with it." And he chuckled.

Baby Wheezer closed his drowsy blue eyes, then opened them and smiled up at his Mother. "How soon is it mornin'," he lisped, "so's me an' Petie tan pway some more?"

Jean snuggled closer to the yellow-haired doll on the pillow beside her. "Mother," she murmured, "will you make me a blue dress with baby pink rosebuds on it?"

In her small cream-colored bed, little Mary Ann waved good-night to her sleepy canary. "Tomorrow," she whispered, "I'm goin' to clean my dollies' house spic and span."

At ten minutes after seven, all was still.

Our Gang was fast asleep.





Our Gang in its Play shop on the big sound stage

